

July 25, 1972

TO: John Holun *McGovern* *AK*
FROM: Bernard Weissbourd
RE: Secrecy in Government

There is not a high level of public understanding of this issue. In fact, it is not an "issue" at the moment. However, Senator McGovern could make it an issue with a series of speeches that would build public awareness of the dangers of the Nixon policy.

It is important that the Senator build the groundwork for this issue with some basic policy commitments, then work up to a series of disclosures that, hopefully, will be both newsworthy and incisive in revealing the operations of the Nixon regime.

Enclosed are three background papers entitled: Executive Privilege, Freedom of Information, and Classification. Also enclosed are four memoranda: Manipulating the Press, Censorship, Viet Nam Dikes, and Bureau of Labor Statistics.

We have collected a great deal of resource material in each of these areas and in some others as well; an Index is enclosed. While there is a wealth of material, the problem is one of selecting the most relevant and dramatic. We are continuing to collect material and believe that the background papers can be improved and the memoranda can become background papers.

We recognize that, so far, we have not turned up anything sensational, and we know that each of the papers could be better focused. However, we thought you should have the background material so that parts of each of the papers could be grouped together for two, three, or more speeches.

We are also collecting material in two other areas:

Right to Privacy. A government that should be open to public scrutiny seems to believe that it is the government's right to scrutinize its citizens by wiretapping, spying, grand jury investigations, etc.

July 25, 1972

Page 2

The CIA. There may or may not be enough material on the activities of this secret branch of the government, but we believe that some investigation is in order.

We are also beginning to collect information on outright lying, as in Nixon's proclaimed neutrality during the Pakistan war while "tilting" toward Pakistan, and on "manufactured language".

The group working on collecting the resource material includes Joseph Antonow, Loren Wittner of his office as well as three summer interns, Burt Weissbourd, Chris Chandler, and myself. Chris Chandler has written the background papers and most of the memoranda.

Finally, we may want to consider the open government issue as part of a larger issue, namely, President Nixon's disrespect for the U.S. Constitution. He has shown his disrespect for the Supreme Court through his attempt to appoint Carswell and Hainesworth, by his stand on busing, and by other public statements. He has continued the usurpation of power by the Executive Branch of the government at the expense of the Legislative and Judicial Branches. In a way, the undeclared war in Viet Nam, the invasion of Cambodia, the activities of the CIA, etc., are results rather than causes of this condition. Nixon has withheld information from Congress, and his support of preventative detention, "no-knock" legislation, wiretapping, etc. abridges the civil liberties of the people.

An early reaction from you would tell us if we are on the right track.

July 25, 1972

Bureau of Labor Statistics

We got into the Bureau of Labor Statistics issue through termination of the Bureau's press conferences. These are now held by White House staff and the Secretary only, though reporters can get questions answered by calling members of the Bureau staff.

I spoke with Harold Goldstein today. He resigned June 30th as Director of the Bureau. His phone number is (301) 229-5088. He pointed out that it is not a black and white situation: the statistics are not falsified, but intimidation of employees may result in different nuances of interpretation. He also pointed out that other bureaus, such as the Bureau of the Census, had political persons assigned to them, particularly in reference to data collected in poverty areas, with the result that, though the statistics may not be false, the nuances are different. He said that he would be willing to discuss this further with someone from the Senator's office. I think that this is worth a personal visit by someone on the Senator's staff.

Earlier, I had spoken with Dr. Seymour Wolfbein, head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics during the Kennedy Administration. He was the one who lead me to Harold Goldstein. Dr. Wolfbein pointed out that the Nixon Administration has given up getting statistics on the "discouraged" and on sub-employment (which includes part-time workers, under-income workers). Goldstein denies this. Wolfbein also said that the census shows that there is an under-count of adult Black males, not only for the census figures but for unemployment as well. He says the important question is "who are the unemployed?". In other words, look at the unemployment rate for teen-age Blacks. He says that there is absolutely no possibility of tampering with the figures. What the Administration has done is taken the interpretation away from the Bureau and given it to the President.

BW:hbr